



The Maintenance Messenger

April 2003 Edition

2d Maintenance Bn



From the Battalion Det OIC:

Dear Spouses, Family and Friends,

Recently, we received a number of articles from our forward deployed Marines; many of which we are able to publish in this month's newsletter. They were received from the respective Companies and the Battalion Commander. I encourage each of you to take the time to read each article, especially a featured article from Corporal Ostrum from ELMACO. He has published a series of articles, which we hope to share with you in the coming months. His perspective of everyday life in the desert applies to all the Marines and Sailors of 2d Maintenance Battalion (Forward).

If you have not had the opportunity to participate in the Battalion events sponsored by respective Companies such as the Bowling Party on March 8th, Key Volunteer Training on April 9th, the Battalion Town Hall Meeting on April 16th (of which hundreds of pictures were shown to include the Marines of the 8th ESB Det) or the Easter Egg Hunt/Cookout on April 19th, I encourage you to come out for the "Mother's Day At the USO" event scheduled for 11 May at the Jacksonville USO. A flyer is attached to this newsletter with all the details.

Though there is no "Official" word as to when our guys and gals will be coming home, please be assured that as soon as the official word is received, the Key Volunteer hotlines will be ablaze with good, accurate info! So if you have ideas and suggestions for homecoming events, it's not too early to start coordinating with your respective Company Key Volunteer. As a reminder, the next **Battalion Town Hall Meeting will be 21 May** at the Battalion Headquarters (2nd Deck Conference Room) at 7:00 p.m. Childcare will be provided in the very next room. Come on out! We want to hear what's on your mind.

Take care and God's blessings to you all,
Maj Don Mills

News From Camp Fox

**Commanding Officer,
LtCol Brent Goddard**

Hello family and friends,

Just a quick note to let everyone know that all is well at Camp Goodwrench; however, we all miss our families. We are continuing to make camp improvements, and our workload continues to climb. Even with the increased workload, the Marines continue to perform in an outstanding manner.

This past week was marked with two media visits, and many of our Marines and sailors were interviewed for both TV and print. It is amazing how many hams that I have in this Battalion. Have the families back home be watching as we have media from all over the country.

Mail has improved (except for mine) with the average letter being delivered in 10 days. Packages are arriving in about the same time. Keep the mail and care packages coming. They are really the highlight of the day.

Many thanks to all that are making our KV program the best in Group. Please keep up the good work, and God Bless.

LtCol Brent Goddard

**OMC Family Readiness Officer,
CWO2 Scott Burns**

Well it's April time and for most of you the signs of spring are very apparent. The trees are starting to bloom, the grass is beginning to turn green, and finally the flowers are starting their early season blossoms. Here in Kuwait, the only two noticeable changes may be that the wind

storms are less frequent and the temperatures are increasing rapidly. We are doing well adjusting to the soaring temperatures, but when you're standing in temperature of 100 plus degrees, the only thing I can say is hot is hot!

Our camp here in the Kuwaiti desert is well established and organized. We currently are poised and waiting with eager anticipation for the conclusion to the fast moving offensive operations by the coalition forces, and finally the end of Operation Iraqi Freedom. However, until then we remain totally focused on mission completion, and stand ready to do whatever we can as a combat service support organization.

The support received from family and friends has been absolutely overwhelming, and is a key component to the moral of the Marines. I find myself at a loss for words trying to express or convey how all of you have significantly touched each and every Marine here in the theater of operations. Your gifts, thoughts and most importantly your love has made each and everyone feel extremely appreciated for our efforts.

I will close with a quote from one of football's greatest, Walter Payton; "It's all about what is inside-outside circumstances play no part in life". All of you are inside of us and I thank you for your loving support.

For all of the Marines forward deployed, take care and God bless.

CWO2 Scott M. Burns

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News From Camp Fox (Continued)

H&S Company Commander, Capt Shane Cote

Greetings from Kuwait,

I am Captain Shane P. Cote. I am the Company Commander for Headquarters and Service Company as well as the Camp Commandant for Maintenance Battalion while in Kuwait. The Company has been deployed to Kuwait since February 02, 2003. I would like to take this opportunity to offer my support and thanks to the families of the Marines and Sailors of Headquarters and Service Company. During this time, the Key Volunteer Network's importance has been abundantly clear. Serving as the primary means of disseminating information to the family members and loved ones of our Marines and Sailors, the Key Volunteer Network is an integral part of the Marine Corps Family Team. The Headquarters and Service Company Key Volunteer Coordinator is Evette Mills. She can be contacted concerning any questions about a deployed loved one or the Key Volunteer Network.

We have spent much of our time here building the Camp. While here we have had quite a few promotions in the Company. They are as follows:

CPL Robert J. Arndt
(Meritoriously)
LCPL Mirelys B. Jimenez
(Meritoriously)
LCPL Krystal S. Cooper
LCPL Joseph Davis
LCPL Christopher D. Bennett
LCPL Michael J. Kerrigan
LCPL Gabriel Longoria
LCPL Juan J. Lopez
LCPL Nickenson Pierrelouis
LCPL Joseph A. Savasta
LCPL Nina V. Solorio

Semper Fidelis,
Shane P. Cote

General Support Maintenance (GSM) Company

On behalf of the Marines of GSM Company, I would like to say "hi" to our families.

The last several weeks have seen the Marines settle into their surroundings and start the preparations needed to ensure that we are ready to accomplish our mission. These preparations include preparing bunkers, setting up the maintenance area, physical training, and quick reaction drills. You can be proud of your Marines. They have put forth 100% effort in accomplishing all of these tasks.

Everyone is in good spirits and has stayed motivated, even through a pretty good windstorm. No one was injured but all of the Company's billeting tents came down during the storm. Our maintenance area was hit pretty hard also. Once the storm was finished the Marines 'turned to' and put everything back together.

The 1st of March was a good day. We had the pleasure of promoting MSgt Hall, Cpl Kruse, and Cpl Taylor to their present ranks.

Please keep the cards and letters coming. It really makes our day when we get them. You are in our thoughts and prayers on a daily basis. Take care of each other and we will see you when we return home.

Forward Maintenance Company Alpha (FMCA), CWO5 Dusty Cooper

The Marines of FMCA continue to meet every challenge with the drive and motivation that has been seen time and again. Our most recent excitement was the great tent rescue operation that occurred in the middle of the night, AKA the perfect sand storm. Our Marines reacted quickly and with teamwork saving most of our billeting areas, ensuring that every Marine was

safe, accounted for, and had a place to sleep. The next day we found that our work areas had been devastated. The Marines of FMCA put in some long hours rebuilding the shops so that maintenance support to the forward units never slowed. With true professionalism, they never lost sight of the mission at hand; keeping the FSSG rolling.

Daily activities of equipment repair captivate most "if not all" our time and our Marines are working hard and proving that no mission is too big; the stage is set for our Marines to show how they collectively influence the mission of the Corps. Events to be highlighted: Promotions: Sgt's Whalon and Christopher, Cpl's Christianson, Michael, Villareal, and Gonzalvo. Navy/Marine Crops Achievement Medals to LCpls Chey, Inaugural, Craft, Joshua, Loomis, Scott, Hawthorne, Mathew, Christopher, Wilson, Bogner, and Danial. These Marines constructed the Battalion fortifications. Congratulations and a "Job Well Done" to each.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to the KV ladies of FMCA, you all know how important your duties are and what a superb job you are doing for us! I owe you yet another lunch when we return.

CWO5 Cooper

Electronics Maintenance Company (ELMACO)

Hello to friends and loved ones from Kuwait were the sun is bright and the sand is plentiful. The Company has been very busy setting up our maintenance complex and making improvements in the camp. Everyone remains dedicated to our task at hand despite the long hours, wind and sand. We faced our first test with the storm most of you have heard about and came through it with flying colors.

News From Camp Fox (Continued)

ELMACO (Cont'd)

I couldn't be prouder of the Marines of ELMACO. The more you throw at them the harder they work. What little time the Marines are not working, they spend maintaining their personal gear, writing to family and friends, and of course sleeping.

The Company has had several meritorious and regular promotions. Cpl D'Allesandro from Headquarters Platoon and Cpl Summers from Radio Platoon were both meritoriously promoted to their present rank, and Cpl Herrera from Forward Maintenance Platoon and Sgt Landry from Headquarters Platoon received regular promotions to their new ranks. The Marines of ELMACO are working night and day for mission accomplishments and wait for the day when the job is done and they can come home to family and loved ones.

Forward Maintenance Bravo (FMCB), Capt Rizzo

Dear Family and Friends of FMC Bravo;

As we finish up our second month here I just wanted to take this opportunity to let you know that we are all doing well and your Marines are still performing above and beyond what is expected of them. It has been a busy month with all that has gone on, but your Marines have answered every challenge that has come our way in doing their jobs. The Marines of Bravo Company continue to watch out for each other and accomplish the mission to support the Marines at the front in every way possible. I could not be happier with the high state of moral and motivation which still exists with

in the Company. Even though the temperature continues to rise here into the 100's some days, you cannot find a complaint amongst the Marines. This month we received over 50 new Marines to the Company who have stepped right in and not missed a beat as far as the high level of performance the Company has attained. It is good to have some new faces in the unit who have brought new ideas on how to best support and accomplish our mission. As I said before, your Marines continue to set the pace out here, and I am personally proud to be a part of this company. Please keep that mail coming as we all enjoy looking at each other's pictures from home. Take care back there, and know that the Marines of Bravo Company are on the job thanks to your support and continued efforts at home.

Semper Fi,
Capt R. J. Rizzo

Chaplain's Chat

By Chaplain Greg McClellan

Over the past few weeks, I have had the opportunity to meet several of you at different events and town hall meetings. Through the weeks ahead, I look forward to meeting many more of you. Let me emphasize my availability to you. If you need to call me or come by to see me, please do so. My cell phone number is (910) 526-7716.

If you need to see me in person, but don't want to come to the Battalion spaces, please let me know and I can work out another location,

such as the Group Chaplain's Office or even the food court.

Feel free to contact me about a spiritual problem, marriage or family issue or if you just need to ask a question. If I don't know the answer, I will refer you to someone who can help.

During these days, many of you are spending time watching the news. Let me encourage you not to watch too much. There is nothing wrong with catching up on the day's events, but don't make it your life. We are doing everything we can to keep you up-to-date on what is happening with the Marines of 2nd Maintenance Battalion. As we find things out, we are passing them through the Key Volunteer Network.

Spiritual health and emotional health are very important during these days. Let me encourage you not to neglect either. Finding a community of faith, whether it is a church, synagogue, mosque or wherever your particular faith group meets, can be very important as another community of support. Faith is a foundation that provides us stability in times of uncertainty. These are the times when we need to draw closer and support each other.

ALL THE COMFORTS OF HOME *and more!

By Cpl Ostrum

This is a first in a series of try-weekly articles about the tries and travestations of ELMACO's Wire Platoon in Kuwait. "Try-weekly" because the stories will try to be sent weekly, but may end up coming every three weeks.

Now that we are here, beginning our third week in-country, it will be a difficult task to sum up the first couple of weeks, transforming ourselves from "in the rear" Marines to "just south of the border" Marines. But here it goes.

We left North Carolina, not in an airplane, but in a time machine. Unlike any other time machine that delivers you to a specific place in history, past or future, this time machine landed us in a place with no time at all. Here, there are no weekends and weekdays. In fact, we have decided every day is Monday here. There are no bed times and work schedules. There is no personal time, alone time, or time outs. This timeless time machine has delivered the ELMACO Marines to a black hole, unfortunately it is a hole full of sand. We do, however, have some times we have begun to recognize. Chow time and religious services are specific times we have grown accustomed to and really enjoy. Also, we have found a considerable amount of time to complain. There is always time for that.

When we first got here, rumors began circulating that we have returned to recruit training. Boot camp, all over again. But those rumors began to cease as soon as we realized that we were allowed to smoke and eat candy bars. So this is more like Air Force boot camp, but with all the yelling of MCRD San Diego.

We sleep in community tents (hooches). Women have

their own homes and men have theirs. At night, you can hear laughter and music coming from some tents. These are the sounds of Marines temporarily forgetting the real reasons why we are here. Some Devil Dogs play cards and others play dominoes. Most write letters home, telling wives, families, and loved ones about the holes they have dug and the blisters on their feet.

Now that we are here and starting to settle down, things are beginning to look and feel a lot like home. We have hot water in the showers, hot breakfast and hot dinner. We have a bag lunch each day that we call SOS's. (Same Old Stuff) There is a television located in the chow hall that can be seen if we are lucky enough to sit close by. It offers a wonderful distraction from our worries by showing non-stop FOX News coverage of the War With Iraq.

We have pick-up and drop off laundry. Of course most of it is missing when it is returned, but socks that can stand on their own after being worn for 6 days straight is a good thing. It is like an extra pair of desert boots, only blacker. Some hooches (our living tents) have radios. There are two stations that play American music and even have American DJ's. This is a relaxing comfort. We also have beds (cots), pillows (rolled up sweatshirts) and blankets (sleeping bags).

With all these comforts of home, we still have more! We carry our gas masks everywhere we go, for the occasional gas drill or scud missile attack drill. But for now, we only use our gas masks for the frequent flatulence of fellow Marines, and the already mentioned stinky socks. We hope that this is all the gas masks are used for.

One other great benefit is that we are never alone. This means no personal time for sorrow or missing home. We use the guardian angel system everywhere we go: we always have a buddy. It is good to eat, sleep, and work

with your fellow Marines. We smoke, go to the bathroom, and walk duty with partners. But the real perks of the buddy system comes when we take showers together. It is a wonderful thing to have that special buddy right by your side, especially when you are trying to get the sand out of those hard to reach areas.

Sand. Oh the sand. The real enemy over here. Sand storms pound our bodies and our homes, knocking them down, making our bivouac areas look more like a destroyed trailer park in Eastern Oklahoma. When we are done cleaning the sand out of our eyes, hair, and deep inside our ears, we begin re-constructing the bunkers, which we have worked on since day one. These are the same, already mentioned bunkers, which protect us from gas attacks (Enemy gas attacks, not the ones that come at night, after Salsa Saturday's Mexican dinner). The bunkers become flooded with sand after a storm and we dig all day to return them back to normal. Yes sir, the mother of all Mother Nature's storms buries them at night while we bring them back to life by day. It is a friendly kind of vicious cycle, keeping us ever busy.

This week, the work complex was built and the jobs we were trained to do, the jobs we were sent here to do, are finally underway. So begins another week in the Never-Never Land of Camp Fox. Never wanted to be here, never want to come back. So today, March 10, 2003, work begins. We still clean our weapons, track our ammo, and de-sand our gas masks twice a day. We continue the dual duty of maintenance warriors, helplessly counting the invisible minutes until we are back home again.

Frequently Used Numbers

Emergencies	
(Ambulance/ Fire/ Police)	9-1-1
American Red Cross	451-2173
Base Chaplain	451-3210
Brewster CDC	451-2672
Camp Lejeune Commissary	451-5071
CREDO	451-1668
DEERS/ ID Card Center	451-1005
Family Housing	450-1628
Hadnot Point Drop-In CDC	451-2653
Jacksonville Water and Sewer	938-5248
JOEMC	353-1940
Key Volunteer Trainer	451-7550
LINKS	451-1299
Marston Pavilion	451-5052
MCAS Commissary	449-6395
MCAS Information	450-1113
MCB CL Information	451-1717
MCAS MCCS	449-6301
MCB Exchange	451-5030
MCB Navy – Marine Corps	
Relief Society	451-5346
Midway Park Community Center	451-1807
Navy Family Practice Clinic	455-1457
Naval Hospital Admissions	450-4101
Naval Hospital Emergency Room	450-4840
Naval Hospital Family Practice	450-4632
Naval Hospital Information	450-4300
Naval Hospital OB/GYN	450-4561
Naval Hospital Pediatrics	450-4500
New Parent Support Program	451-5286
Onslow County Water Dept	455-0722
Onslow Memorial Hospital	577-2345
PREP	450-0991
Stone Street Youth Pavilion	355-9000
Tarawa Terrace CDC	450-1646
Tarawa Terrace Community Center	451-2253
Tarawa Terrace Youth Pavilion	355-9100
Time and Temperature	451-3000
Tricare	800-931-9501
Tricare – Naval Hospital	353-0491
WIC	353-0022
Youth Sports	451-2177

Key Volunteer Coordinators

Battalion Coordinator	
Bonnie Burns	353-0040
Alpha Company	
Faith Watrous	353-5655
Bravo Company	
Susan Deismann	355-2365
Milla Rizzo	347-7129
ELM Company	
Tammy Blanding	353-3538
Mary Brown	355-1888
GSM Company	
Kathryn Lewis	347-1595
H&S Company	
Evette Mills	219-9738
HMC Company	
Pam Schwartz	346-9506
OMC Company	
Lori Allen	219-4200

Upcoming Events – Contact your Key Volunteer for questions regarding any of these events.

KV Meeting at the II MEF KV Center Apr 30 @ 1000

May Mania Family Day at W.P.T. Hill Field.
Carnival rides will be FREE to all 2D FSSG families.
(Valid Military ID will be required). FSSG will have
three tents with free food provided. May 10 @ 1100

Mother's Day Out at the USO Sponsored by
Bravo Company May 11 @ 1830

Monthly Battalion Town Hall Meeting
In the Bn conference room May 21 @ 1900

Mom's Day Out Events at TT Comm Center
(FREE on-site childcare provided) Every Friday

Moving?

We want to make sure you continue to receive this newsletter as well as other Maintenance Bn communications. Please contact your Key Volunteer with address and phone number changes.

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MOTHER'S DAY AT THE USO

Sponsored by bravo company

This pot-luck event will take place on Sunday, 11 May, from 2 - 5 p.m. at the USO in downtown Jacksonville on Tallman St.

Each company is asked to bring the following:
FMA / FMB / ELMACO = Main Dish
GSM / H&S = Side Dish
HMC / OMC = Dessert

We will have:

- A Father's Day Project for the kids
- Face Painting
- Video Games
- Pool Tables
- Ping Pong Tables
- A Movie
- Each company will be recording a video moment that will be sent to the spouses. Look for your company poster.
- Belly Dancing – There will be four 45 min classes with a 15 person limit each. First 15 to sign up for each class will get in.